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SECURITY INFORMATION

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GENERAL

1. Britain seeks to delay UN General Assembly meeting until after American elections: Britain has asked Belgium to support a tentative proposal to postpone the opening of the United Nations General Assembly from 15 October until shortly after 4 November, according to a high Belgian Foreign Office official. He states that Belgium will probably support the British proposal if it is made. (S S/S Brussels 206, 21 Aug 52)

Comment: Last spring the head of the British UN delegation stated that his Foreign Office believed that the seventh session of the General Assembly, originally scheduled for September, should be postponed because Foreign Secretary Eden felt that anything he might say would be injected into the American presidential campaign. At that time, US delegate Warren Austin stated that he did not wish the General Assembly session to be tied in any way to the election.

FAR EAST

2. French display lack of aggressiveness in Indochina: Ambassador Heath, apparently referring to a report that Paris is reluctant to endorse General Salan's plans for airborne operations in Indochina this fall, has expressed astonishment at the French lack of a sense of urgency, or even of interest, in developing an offensive in Indochina.

He believes that if "vague future claims" on available aircraft are allowed to take precedence over combat needs in Indochina, it will be difficult to justify to the American public the scale and priority of American material aid to Indochina. (TS S/S Saigon 436, 24 Aug 52)

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Comment: General Salan's plans for carrying the offensive to the Viet Minh by dropping airborne battalions behind enemy lines necessitate the loan, from France or the United States, of a large number of transport aircraft.

Although such an operation would be an important step away from what has seemed a defensive psychology on the part of the French, the project's practicality is open to question, in view of the Viet Minh's usual avoidance of open combat and its ability at dispersal.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Libya may demand double compensation from US for air base: The Libyan Government will soon request the United States for an annual payment of \$2,000,000 for use of the Wheelus Air Base instead of the \$1,000,000 previously agreed upon. American Minister Villard believes that the Libyan demand will carry with it the suggestion that ratification of the base agreement will be impossible without the increased compensation.

Villard believes that Prime Minister Muntasser has delayed submitting the base agreement to parliament because of Libyan indecision on how much additional compensation to demand. He suspects that the new demands [REDACTED] rather than to Libyan initiative. (TS S/S Benghazi 24, 22 Aug 52)

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[REDACTED] Libyan officials have previously indicated their desire to capitalize on the country's strategic position.

WESTERN EUROPE

4. Dutch reassured on NATO defense plans: The Dutch Acting Defense Minister has stated that General Ridgway's letter of 14 August to the Netherlands Chief of Staff has convinced the Dutch of the determination of Generals Ridgway and Juin to defend the Netherlands in case of hostilities.

The Dutch Minister admitted that speculation among Dutch officials and in the press that the Allies would withdraw from

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the Netherlands under pressure has had an "unhelpful" effect on both the Netherlands and NATO, (TS Paris 1130, 21 Aug 52)

Comment: The Dutch, who have suspected that the French defense concept was based on withdrawal from large parts of the Low Countries, had begun to believe that NATO air-base concentrations did not protect the Netherlands adequately. The Dutch press had been speculating on discord between France and other NATO countries over defense of the Elbe as against the Rhine.

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